

(Oct. 1990)

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

**1. Name of Property**historic name McGavock-Gatewood-Webb Houseother names/site number Fountain Blue; McGavock House; McGavock-Harris-Webb House**2. Location**street & number 908 Meridian StreetN/A ☐ not for publicationcity or town NashvilleN/A ☐ vicinitystate Tennessee code TN county Davidson code 037 zip code 37207**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See Continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that the property is:

☐ entered in the National Register.☐ See continuation sheet☐ determined eligible for the National Register.☐ See continuation sheet☐ determined not eligible for the National Register.☐ removed from the National Register.☐ other, (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

McGavock-Gatewood-Webb House  
Name of Property

Davidson County, Tennessee  
County and State

## 5. Classification

### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private  
☐ public-local  
☐ public-State  
☐ public-Federal

### Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- ☒ building(s)  
☐ district  
☐ site  
☐ structure  
☐ object

### Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

### Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

### Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

## 6. Function or Use

### Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

### Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

WORK IN PROGRESS

## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER, with Italianate influence

### Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE

walls BRICK; WOOD

roof ASPHALT

other STONE

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See continuation sheets.

**8. Statement of Significance****Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☐ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☒ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** moved from its original location.
- ☐ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

SETTLEMENT/EXPLORATION

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

**Period of Significance**

c.1840-c. 1915

**Significant Dates**

c. 1840, c. 1870, 1915

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Unknown

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References****Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):** N/A

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ Previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- ☐ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State Agency
- ☐ Federal Agency
- ☒ Local Government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other
- Name of repository: Metro Nashville Archives

McGavock-Gatewood-Webb House  
Name of Property

Davidson County, Tennessee  
County and State

## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** Less than one acre Nashville West 308 NE

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 16 520814 4004569  
Zone Easting Northing  
2 \_\_\_\_\_

3 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing  
4 \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ See continuation sheet

### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Lauren Nickas, Elizabeth Moore, and Carroll Van West  
organization MTSU Center for Historic Preservation date February 2, 2007  
street & number Box 80 telephone 615-898-2947  
city or town Murfreesboro state TN zip code 37130

### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

### Continuation Sheets

### Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

### Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

### Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

## Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Ray of Hope Community Church c/o Larnita Williams  
street & number 901 Meridian Street telephone 615-227-4110  
city or town Nashville state TN Zip code 37207

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listing. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Davidson County, Tennessee

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## 7. Narrative Description

The McGavock-Harris-Gatewood-Webb House is located at 908 Meridian Street in Nashville, Davidson County, Tennessee. It sits to the east of the Cumberland River, opposite downtown Nashville, within a dense residential area. The two-story brick and frame dwelling has an asphalt shingle pyramidal roof, a continuous limestone foundation, and exposed rafter tails. The house is set back approximately fifty yards from Meridian Street and its well-defined yard contains large mature trees from c. 1900. It sits on a 0.97 acre lot in an area where the average lot size is approximately 0.25 acres. The south side of the property is fairly level while the north side is characterized by a gentle downward slope that overlooks other properties in the neighborhood.

Due to the paucity of public records and other historical documents associated with the estate's antebellum history, the dating of the original period of construction of the property is not exact, but extant physical evidence suggests that the house experienced two building periods in the 1840s. The first section, c. 1840, was a two-story hall-and-parlor structure that faced north (# 1 and 4 on floor plan). The second period of construction occurred c. 1844 when the two large rooms now in the central portion of the house were added (# 2 and 3 on floor plan). The third construction phase occurred c. 1870 and consisted of changes to the east portico and south porch as well as interior changes. At this time, the facade of the home was shifted to face east, toward the newly created Meridian Street. Around 1915, the house was divided into separate apartments and is currently undergoing restoration to its c. 1915 appearance prior to these changes, including the removal of these apartments and numerous partition walls throughout the house.

### EXTERIOR

The east, now main, façade of the house fronts Meridian Street and dates to c. 1870. Composed of three symmetrical bays, the lower story is of brick construction and the upper story is frame covered in weatherboard. The lower brick story has a c. 1915 Craftsman-style main entrance with a wood multi-light central door. This entrance has a Craftsman surround with a single-light transom and corner lights above the door and multi-light sidelights. This lower story also has two symmetrical Italianate-influenced bays that project from the home in a tripartite fashion. Each bay contains three c. 1870 rounded-arch, one-over-one, double-hung wood windows with a central, arched window flanked by eight-light sidelights. The upper frame story is slightly recessed and has a full-length veranda with a wood floor and an intricately designed Italianate-influenced milled valance and balustrade. The southernmost bay of the upper story has an eight-over-two, double-hung wood window. The central bay is recessed and contains a c. 1915 entrance composed of a door with two wood panels in the lower half and a single light in the upper half, a single-light arched transom, a simple wood surround, and radiating brick voussoirs above the transom. The wall surrounding the entrance is brick and the inner walls of the recess are covered in wood siding.

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The northernmost bays on the second story have c. 1870 eight-over-two double-hung wood windows.

The south elevation contains a c. 1870 two-story portico that remains open on the lower story, but was enclosed c. 1915 with wood siding on the upper. The easternmost bay of the lower, brick story is part of the c. 1870 projecting brick bay on the front of the home and contains a single one-over-one, double-hung, arched wood window. Extending westward from this bay across the lower south elevation is a portico with five supporting elements—three turned wood posts on square brick piers and two one-story square brick piers. The portico has a cut stone foundation and wood plank floors. On the west half of the elevation a small set of c. 1915 concrete block steps leads to the portico. The south wall of the house within the portico contains six bays. From west to east, the westernmost bay contains a simple c. 1915 door with three wood panels in the lower half and two lights in the upper half. The next bay contains a c. 1844 door opening with recessed, c. 1844, two-light sidelights. The door within this opening dates to c. 1870 and contains wood panels in the lower half and a single light, decorative woodwork, and scalloped detailing in the upper half. An added, c. 1870, recessed single-light arched transom and a radiating brick stretcher-course voussoir are above the entrance. The third bay is a blank brick wall. The fourth and sixth bays each contain a single c. 1870 one-over-one, double-hung, arched, wood window. The fifth bay contains a c. 1870 door and transom identical to that in the second bay, but without the sidelights. The inner wall of the easternmost bay that faces west onto the portico contains a door identical to that in the fifth bay of the portico.

The upper, frame story of the south elevation contains a porch that was enclosed c. 1915 with weatherboard siding. On the west half of the upper story, there are two closely spaced c. 1915 four-over-four, double-hung wood windows. In the center bays of the second story, there are four c. 1915 multi-light fixed windows that vary in size. In the easternmost bay, there is a single c. 1870 four-over-two, double-hung wood window.

The west elevation, or rear, of the structure is composed of five irregular bays and the side of the south porch. On the southernmost corner, both stories have been enclosed with wood boards, a c. 1915 alteration to what was likely a c. 1870 open-air portico. The remainder of the west elevation is brick and contains five bays. The northernmost bay contains a single window with a stone sill and a segmental arched surround in both the first and second stories. The first story window is boarded and the second story window is a c. 1844 four-over-four, double-hung wood window. Below the first floor window is a concrete block, shed roof, sheltered entrance to the basement. The next bay projects slightly and forms the back of an exterior chimney that no longer penetrates the roof. The central bay contains a simple wood door on the first floor with a stone and concrete stoop. The remnants of a wood covering extending southward beyond the length of the door suggests that this stoop was likely covered by some type of structure at one time. South of the entrance in the second story is a single c. 1870 double-hung wood window with a multi-light

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decorative upper sash and a stone sill set within an arched surround. The southernmost bay contains two c. 1844 segmental arched windows with stone sills. The first floor window is boarded and the second floor window is a four-over-four, double-hung wood window. Star-capped structural ties are visible in the c. 1840 section of this façade. The brickwork along this elevation has been patched at various points, but the cut stone foundation reveals a difference in the foundation between the c. 1840-c. 1844 portion and the c. 1870 porch foundation. In the c. 1840 section of the foundation, the stones are textured, irregular rough-cut stone. The c. 1844, or middle section, of the foundation is machined and more regular than the c. 1840 section. The c. 1870 porch foundation is of textured, regular stones that are more polished than the c. 1840 or c. 1844 sections.

The north elevation dates to c. 1840 and c. 1870 and contains the entrance to the original hall-and-parlor structure. This elevation is composed of four bays, the easternmost bay being part of the projecting c. 1870 bay on the main façade. The lower story of this bay is brick and contains a c. 1870 one-over-one, double-hung, arched wood window. The upper story is covered in weatherboard siding and contains a c. 1870 rectangular, four-over-two, double-hung wood window. The south three bays are unified in appearance and date to c. 1840. The northernmost of these three bays contains the original entrance on the lower story and a four-over-four, double-hung wood window in a segmental-arched surround on the upper story. The entrance is composed of a wood-and-glass door set within a segmental arched surround. The c. 1840 door has three wood panels on the lower half and two lights in the upper. Recessed c. 1840 single-light sidelights flank the door and contain two wood panels in the lower half. A c. 1840 three-light transom tops the door. The first and second stories of the remaining bays contain c. 1840 four-over-four, double-hung wood windows within segmental-arched surrounds. The westernmost window on the lower floor has been boarded. A double row of radiating brick header-course voussoirs top each of the windows and doors. A distinct break is visible in the wall and stone foundation between the c. 1840 façade and the c. 1870 bay addition. Star-capped structural ties are visible on this façade.

## INTERIOR

The core of the interior of the structure is roughly a four-room plan, with the first floor having retained much of its c. 1844 floor plan. Additions in c. 1870 added bays and porches onto the east façade and south elevation. Several first floor interior features, including doors and trim, appear to have been updated c. 1870 to c. 1880 to create a unified appearance with the concurrent additions to the structure. The upper story underwent several changes in the first half of the twentieth century that resulted from the division of the house into separate apartments.

The home is now entered through the c. 1915 Craftsman door on the c. 1870 east façade. The door opens onto a foyer with brick walls on the south, west, and north sides and one plaster wall on the east side. The foyer also has three c. 1870 wood single-light doors with single-light arched

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transoms and Italianate-influenced surrounds on the north, south, and west walls. The doors have Italianate and scalloped detailing, and radiating brick voussoirs are above the transoms. The ceiling of the foyer is of beaded board and has a simple light fixture and an enclosed hatch door.

Entering from the door on the south wall of the foyer, the c. 1870 south bay has two additional doors on the west wall. The southernmost c. 1870 door has an arched surround and a single-light arched transom. The door is single-light on the upper half and has two panels on the lower half. The northernmost door is a c. 1870 five-paneled wood door with a rectangular surround and an enclosed transom. The south bay also has three c. 1870 identical wood one-over-one, double-hung windows within rectangular surrounds. The upper light of each of these windows is arched, accommodating the arched surround on the exterior of the building. On the east wall, there is another identical window flanked with four-over-four, double-hung sidelights. The corner blocks of these windows and doors are square with rounded bulls-eyes. The windows in this room reach almost down to the floor, ending at the top of the baseboards. The walls are currently covered in floral wallpaper, but the plaster work is being restored. The floor is hardwood and the ceiling is plain wood board. Simple c. 1870 wood baseboards surround the room.

Entering the c. 1870 north bay from the north wall of the foyer, the bay's windows are identical to those in the south bay. The north bay has one additional door on the southernmost end of the west wall. This door is set within a rectangular door surround and is a c. 1870 five-paneled door with a single-light transom. The corner blocks of the windows and doors are square with a rounded bulls-eye. The floors in this bay are hardwood and the ceiling is plain wood boards. Simple wood c. 1870 baseboards surround the room. In the north bay, the wallpaper is a geometric pattern but the plaster walls are being restored. The west wall projects in the center to accommodate the rear of a fireplace in the adjacent room.

The foyer leads west into a room in the central interior portion of the home (# 2 on floor plan). This room dates to the c. 1844 additions but much of the material dates to c. 1870. Along the east wall are two doors—the arched opening leading from the foyer and the rectangular opening leading from the south bay. Between these doors is a c. 1844 bricked fireplace with a simple wood mantel. The mantel has square pilasters supporting a plain frieze and a mantelshelf. On the south wall is a c. 1870 wood door with a single light in the upper half and two panels in the lower half. An arched transom tops the door. Flanking the door are two c. 1844 one-over-one, double-hung wood windows. The door and windows have square corner blocks with rounded bulls-eyes. The west wall of this room contains a large c. 1844 two-panel wood door. A heavy wood rectangular surround frames this door and has plain square corner blocks. On the north wall is a large rectangular opening with paired c. 1870 paneled pocket doors. This room has plaster walls, hardwood floors, a plaster ceiling, and c. 1870 wood baseboards.



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Moving west through the large c. 1844 door, is what was once a large stair hall (# 3 on floor plan). The wood c. 1880 Eastlake-influenced staircase that provides access to the second story is located in this room. This staircase runs north along the west wall of the home and sharply turns east along the north wall before reaching the second floor. Currently, the stairs have no balustrade or banister. The stair carriage contains Eastlake-influenced wood paneling. Below the staircase, there is a small closet that can be accessed through a small wood door. The staircase is most easily accessed from the lower south portico through a c.1915 door on the south wall. There is no evidence of another staircase leading from the first to second floors of the home, suggesting that this was the location of the c. 1844 staircase original to this portion of the house. Also on the south wall, just east of the c. 1915 door, is a c. 1844 opening with a rectangular door surround and recessed two-light and two-paneled sidelights. The door appears to have been replaced with the c. 1870 alterations to the home and has a single light in the upper half and two wood panels in the lower half. An arched transom which also appears to date to c. 1870 tops the door. The corner blocks are square with rounded bulls-eyes. There is one large rectangular wood window along the west wall that has been boarded. On the north wall is a c. 1844 rectangular opening containing paired single-panel wood doors and a six-light transom. The surround is a heavy simple wood surround. The lathe-and-plaster ceiling has been partially destroyed revealing wood floor joists on the north side of the room. The ceiling is partially covered with wood boards, suggesting that the plasterwork was covered at one time to match that of other first floor rooms. The floors of this room are wood with wood baseboards and the walls are plaster. The baseboards in this room are much simpler than those in the bays and in room #2 and appear to date to c. 1844.

In the northwest corner of the home, there is a room with plaster walls, hardwood floors, and an enclosed fireplace along the west wall (# 4 on floor plan). The south wall contains the double-door entrance from the stair hall. Flanking the fireplace on the west wall is a simple door opening and a boarded four-over-four, double-hung wood window. On the north wall is a single four-over-four, double-hung wood window, also boarded from the exterior. The east wall contains a plain rectangular opening leading into the northeast room. The windows are set within rectangular openings with trim similar to, but simpler than, that in the other first floor rooms. The plaster walls are deteriorated, exposing the brick underneath. No baseboards remain in this room. Although in need of repair, the materials that remain in the room appear to be original to the c. 1840 hall-and-parlor structure.

Between this room and the north bay, there is another room with a fireplace along what would have been the original easternmost wall of the home before the addition of the front portico around 1870 (# 1 on floor plan). The west wall contains the plain rectangular opening into the northwest room. On the north wall is the rectangular c. 1840 door opening with a two-light, three-panel, wood door; single-light, two-panel recessed sidelights; and a three-light transom. Just west of this door is a four-over-four, double-hung wood window. On the east wall is a brick veneer fireplace with a simple wood mantel, a tile hearth, and a filled-in firebox. The mantel is the same design as the one

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in room 2. South of the fireplace is the c. 1870 rectangular opening leading into the north bay. The opening has a five-panel wood door with a single-light transom and square corner blocks. On the south wall, there is a c. 1844 large opening into the adjacent room to the south that contains c. 1870 paneled pocket doors. The floor in this room is hardwood, simple original baseboards surround the walls, the walls are plaster-and-lathe, and the ceiling is plain wood boards. A now covered stairway to the basement is evident in the floor at the southwest corner of the room.

The floor plan of the second story was altered during the first half of the twentieth century when the house was divided into separate apartments. The second floor is reached from the staircase in the southwest corner of the house. The staircase in the upper stair hall retains its Eastlake-influenced balustrade c. 1880 composed of heavy turned newel posts with rounded caps and turned balusters with a simple handrail. The west wall of the stair hall contains a single c. 1844 window in a rectangular surround with square corner blocks. The wood window is double-hung with a decorative multi-light upper sash. To the north of this window along the west wall of the stair hall is a simple paneled wood door leading to the attic. South of the window on the south wall of the stair hall is a simple four-paneled wood door leading into a closet that contains a single four-over-four, double-hung wood window. Also on the south wall, a c. 1844 door leads into a small c. 1915 room (#8 on the floor plan). North of the staircase is a closet with a simple two-panel wood door. On the north wall is a c. 1844 door leading into the northwest room (#9 on the floor plan). The east wall of the upper stair hall contains two openings, one leading into the upper hall and the other leading into a large room along the north elevation of the house (#5 on the floor plan). The door trim on the doorways leading into room 5, 8, and 9 all match the trim on the first floor and have square corner blocks with rounded bulls-eyes and decorative molding profiles. The walls are plaster, the floors are hardwood, and a simple wood baseboard surrounds the room.

The upper hall extends from the upper stair hall to a recessed opening onto the upper east porch. The c. 1870 opening contains a single-light, two-panel wood door with a single-light, arched transom. On the north wall of the upper hall is a large rectangular opening into the room along the north elevation of the house. On the south wall of the upper hall are c. 1915 doors into two of the small rooms between the upper hall and the upper south porch (#7 & #8 on the floor plan). There are plaster walls, simple wood baseboards, and hardwood floors in the upper hall.

North of the upper hall and upper stair hall are two large rooms. The larger of these two rooms is # 5 on floor plan. Along its west wall is the opening into the upper stair hall. On the north wall are two c. 1820 four-over-four, double-hung wood windows. The east wall contains a brick fireplace with a simple wood mantel similar to those on the first floor. South of the fireplace is a c. 1870 single paneled wood door with an arched transom. The door and window trim in this space matches that on the first floor and have square corner blocks with rounded bulls-eyes and decorative molding profiles. The walls and ceiling are plaster, the floors are hardwood, and simple

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original wood baseboards surround the room. A partition wall has recently been removed from the center of this room.

Prior to recent renovation efforts (c. 2005) the room had several layers of wallpaper from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Their recent removal revealed remnants of a painted scenic vignette measuring approximately six feet long by three feet high in the center of the west wall that likely dates to the c. 1844 additions to the house. While some of the paint has flaked away over time, the colors remain fairly vivid. The room once featured coral-painted walls with a fanciful tropical scene of lush vegetation and palm trees. With its high level of decoration, this room likely served a public function, perhaps even a fashionable ballroom typical of the mid to late-nineteenth century.

West of this space, accessed from the upper stair hall, is a room in the northwest corner of the house (# 9 on floor plan). This room contains two c. 1840 rectangular, four-over-four, double-hung wood windows, one on the west wall and one on the north wall. At the center of the west wall, the wall projects slightly for the chimney passage from below. The walls and ceiling are deteriorated plaster and wallpaper, the floors are hardwood, and c. 1840 wood baseboards surround the room.

Along the east elevation of the second story are four small frame rooms, two on either side of the porch opening (# 10, 11, 12, and 13 on floor plan). From physical examination, it appears that these were originally two larger c. 1870 rooms, one on either side of the porch opening, that were each divided, c. 1915, into two rooms. Three of these rooms contain a single c. 1870 eight-over-two, double-hung wood window on their east walls. In the place of its window, the room directly south of the porch recess (room #12) has a single, paneled, c. 1915 wood door leading onto the porch. The outer two rooms (# 10 and 13) have one additional c. 1870 four-over-four, double-hung wood window on the north and south elevation, respectively. The room directly north of the porch recess (room #11) has a c. 1915 door on its south wall leading onto the porch recess. These rooms have plaster walls, hardwood floors, and plaster ceilings. Simple c. 1870 wood baseboards line the rooms.

South of the upper hall and upper stair hall are three rooms that date to the c. 1915 conversion of this space into separate apartments (# 6, 7, and 8). Rooms 6 and 7 may have been one large space dating to c. 1844. Each of these rooms have a single c. 1915 door leading into the upper hall and a single c. 1870 window onto the upper south porch. A c. 1915 door leads between these two rooms. Room #8 contains a c. 1844 door from the upper stair hall and a c. 1844 doorway onto the upper south porch. The doorway onto the upper south porch has square corner blocks with rounded bulls-eyes and sidelights with a single light in the upper half and two wood panels in the lower half. An arched transom tops the doorway. The sidelights and the transom have been painted over and the door is missing. Just east of the doorway is an opening in the upper half of the wall onto the upper south porch. It appears to date to c. 1915 and contains a small counter.

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This room and the closet to the west were likely a single larger space at one time. These rooms have hardwood floors, plaster walls, and c. 1915 wood baseboards.

Along the entire south elevation of the second story is the upper south porch. This was once an open portico that was enclosed c. 1915 to accommodate the separate apartments. The original millwork and turned columns of this upper south porch are visible behind walls that have been removed as part of the restoration process. This room has walls constructed of various materials including brick and weatherboard. The walls have been covered in various wallpapers with geometric shapes. Windows of varying sizes and lights line the south wall of the porch. On the north wall are window and door openings onto the three small rooms between the porch and the upper halls. At the west end of the north wall, leading into room # 8, is a c. 1844 wood entry, similar to that in the lower stair hall (room # 3). The surround is rectangular with recessed two-light, two-panel sidelights. A c. 1870 covered arched transom is above the door and is framed by a radiating brick voussoir. East of this door is the c. 1915 rectangular counter opening with a triangular pediment. At one time, this porch was partitioned into four small rooms to serve the needs of the boarding house, but these partition walls have since been removed.

The attic is accessible from the upper stair hall behind the staircase. It has exposed wood rafters and floor joints. There are also exposed structural rectangular brick piers. Remnants of four of the original brick chimneys are evident here beneath the replaced roof. Three of the fireplaces are evident in rooms 1, 2, and 4. A passage for a fourth chimney flue is evident between rooms 7 and 8 on the second floor. None of these historic chimneys are still visible from the exterior of the home due to the replacement of the roof.

The basement is accessed from the concrete block sheltered entrance at the northwest corner of the west elevation. This structure has a wood door and an asphalt-shingled roof over wood planks. This structure houses a staircase that leads to the basement of the home. The basement is the entire size of the footprint of the home and includes two rooms and additional crawlspace. Accessed from the exterior of the house the room at the northwest corner of the basement contains a stone fireplace and a circular wrought iron pot rack that hangs from the ceiling. This room appears to be the original kitchen to the home. Just east of this room is a second room along the northern end of the home. It has stone walls and openings into the crawl space beneath the remainder of the house. These two rooms are underneath what is thought to be the original c. 1840 section.

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## 8. Statement of Significance

The McGavock-Harris-Gatewood-Webb House, at 908 Meridian Avenue in Nashville, Davidson County, Tennessee, is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places for its locally significant association, under Criterion A, with the settlement and development patterns of Nashville and Davidson County, especially the shift from rural estates surrounding the nineteenth century city to the suburban expansion and neighborhood development of the city in the World War I era.

In May 2006, the house (referred to as the James McGavock House) was designated as one of 32 individual local historic landmarks by the Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission and the Metro City Council of Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County (Ordinance No. BL2006-1034).

### The Antebellum Era

Although the current form and appearance of the house reflect periods of growth that date to c. 1840 and later, the history of the property begins around 1785 when David McGavock acquired a 640-acre tract on the east side of the Cumberland River. McGavock was one of the first settlers of Davidson County and served as the Register of the Land Office from 1806 to 1838.<sup>1</sup> In addition to this land, McGavock also acquired 1600 acres for his father, James McGavock, Sr. Although together they owned a considerable amount of land, neither father nor son actually lived on the property. Between 1808 and 1816, David McGavock divided the 640 acres evenly between his sons James and John.

During his period of ownership, from 1816 to 1841, James McGavock (1791-1841) established a country estate that he called Fountain Blue, on his 320 acres. The original portion of the McGavock-Harris-Gatewood-Webb House is attributed to McGavock's period of ownership and has been given the date of c. 1840, meaning this substantial brick, Federal style section of the nominated property was constructed when McGavock was in his late forties and nearing the age of 50. The new brick home probably replaced an earlier dwelling, but no documentary or architectural evidence exists to indicate the appearance or materials of an earlier dwelling. The earlier dwelling may have been a dog-trot structure noted in an 1870 plat of the property as attached to the brick dwelling.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ashley Watson, "Report on the Status of Research Regarding the McGavock-Gatewood-Webb House, 908 Meridian Street" (paper presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for American Architectural History, Middle Tennessee State University, Spring 2005), 4.

<sup>2</sup> Debie Cox, "The McGavock-Harris-Lindsley House, North Edgefield, Davidson County." Friends of Metropolitan Archives of Nashville and Davidson County, TN.

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The unknown builders of the original brick section of the nominated property constructed a two-story, brick, hall-and-parlor house facing north and placed it on a rough, hand-cut limestone foundation. The original facade of McGavock's house now comprises two-thirds of the north elevation of the nominated property. In *A History of Tennessee Arts* (2004), architectural historian Michael T. Gavin states, "The Georgian-Federal building manner that came to Tennessee via Philadelphia, Baltimore, or Charleston in the 1820s and 1830s was not quite at home in the rugged southwestern landscape, but its belated appearance represented the ultimate social and aesthetic aspirations of the wealthier second generation pioneers at that time."<sup>3</sup> James McGavock, the son of pioneer David McGavock, fits that description perfectly. James McGavock may have built the house earlier--as Gavin points out the common pattern was the 1820s or 1830s--but no records confirm that the common architectural pattern happened with this property. Ironically, the best records we have on McGavock concern his death in 1841, when he was shot and killed on White's Creek Turnpike by an acquaintance named Samuel Earthman, the result of an altercation that had occurred between the two men a few days prior.<sup>4</sup> He lived on this property at this time, thus the best date for the first phase of construction of the dwelling is c. 1840.

After his death, the *Nashville Union* extolled the life of James McGavock in general terms, celebrating his family and social ties more so than his own career or accomplishments. The editor wrote:

...society has sustained the loss of one of its most estimable and useful citizens. In the various relations of social and domestic duty, he played well his part. He was a correct man in every sense of the word—fair in his dealings, with a just conception of what was due to others as well as to himself, regulated by an unusually nice and excited sense of honor, he enjoyed the respect and friendship of a large circle of acquaintances. His family connexions (sic) are numerous, opulent, highly respectable, and many of them were among the earliest settlers of this county.<sup>5</sup>

Following James McGavock's death, the land was divided between four of his six surviving children. His daughter Lucinda inherited 94 acres and the home in 1841.<sup>6</sup> The next year she married Jeremiah George Harris, a man who rose to great prominence in Nashville and was well connected to the political milieu of his time at both the state and national levels. He was best known in Tennessee for his work as the editor of the *Nashville Union*, a position he had assumed

<sup>3</sup> Michael T. Gavin, "Building with Wood, Brick, and Stone: Vernacular Architecture in Tennessee, 1770-1900." In *A History of Tennessee Arts*, ed. Carroll Van West (Knoxville, TN: The University of Tennessee Press, 2004), 26-27.

<sup>4</sup> 25 January 1841, *Nashville Whig*.

<sup>5</sup> 28 January 1841, *Nashville Union*.

<sup>6</sup> Debie Cox, "The McGavock-Harris-Lindsley House, North Edgefield, Davidson County," Friends of Metropolitan Archives of Nashville and Davidson County, TN, available at:

<http://freepages.misc.rootweb.com/~nashvillearchives/house1.html>, 2.

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in 1839; and under Harris's leadership, the *Union* gained great prestige.<sup>7</sup> Harris continued to play an important role in the publication of the *Union* for years after he stepped down from his official role as editor in 1842. As evidenced in several published volumes of *The Correspondence of James K. Polk*, Harris was also involved politically with the Democratic Party and as a major supporter and friend of James K. Polk throughout the middle of the nineteenth century.

In 1843, the Navy sent Harris to Europe to fulfill his military duties.<sup>8</sup> After returning to Tennessee, Harris spent more time at his family home and addressed the needs of his growing family (a son Joseph was born in 1843). In 1844, Harris wrote to James K. Polk that, "A good deal of my time is necessarily occupied in having an eye to my dwelling house now building within a mile of town."<sup>9</sup> Judging from physical evidence, the Harris's doubled the size of the house and also updated its architectural appearance from the conservatism of the Federal style to the more stylish attributes of the Greek Revival. Two rooms that make up the south half of the nominated dwelling were added at this time, creating a four-room plan, with a centrally located staircase, from the original hall-and-parlor. The foundation, in particular, of the new section reflected better craftsmanship and the use of machine-cut limestone blocks. Machine-cut limestone appears in other Nashville buildings of the 1840s, including St. Mary's Cathedral (NR 7/8/1970) and the first phases of construction of the Tennessee State Capitol (NHL, 7/8/1970).

The expansion of the House under the direction of the Harris's shifted the facade to the south and the new primary dwelling entrance has more detailed molding profiles than that on the north elevation. The addition of a new interior staircase linked the two portions. The family also added interior decoration with a painted scenic wall mural in room #5. Though unsigned and not dated, its subject matter, a tropical locale with palm trees and lush vegetation, is reminiscent of scenes from landscape wallpapers so popular in the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>10</sup> These imported French wallpapers are known to have hung in several Nashville homes, The Hermitage (constructed 1819, scenic wallpaper installed 1837, NR 10/15/1966), the W.G.M. Campbell house on Lebanon Road, Rokeby, and Belmont (5/06/1971).<sup>11</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Paul H. Bergeron, "James K. Polk and the Jacksonian Press in Tennessee," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* XLI, no. 3 (Fall 1982): 270-277.

<sup>8</sup> Commission- Jeremiah George Harris, "McGavock-Hays Papers, Tennessee State Library and Archives, MFM 1199, 4.1.

<sup>9</sup> Harris to Polk, 2 August 1844, *Correspondence of James K. Polk, Vol. VII, January-August 1844*, ed. Wayne Cutler (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1989), 425.

<sup>10</sup> Gail Caskey Winkler and Roger W. Moss, *Victorian Interior Decoration: American Interiors: 1830-1900* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1986), 15-17.

<sup>11</sup> Amelia Whitsitt Edwards, *Nashville Interiors, 1866-1920* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 1999), 19-20.

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Jeremiah Harris' wife Lucinda died in 1847, one year after giving birth to their daughter, Lucie.<sup>12</sup> After the death of his wife, further history associated with the dwelling has not been identified until the Civil War years. Both Jeremiah Harris and son Joseph Harris were actively involved in service during the Civil War—Jeremiah's service to the U.S. Navy made him a staunch Union supporter, while Joseph chose to fight for the Confederacy. Joseph spent much of the war based out of the Knoxville area and died in Europe in 1865.<sup>13</sup> This relationship between Jeremiah and his son Joseph is an often common example of the direct effects of the Civil War on family relationships in Tennessee. During the Civil War period, the house experienced little activity. In addition to the absence of both father and son, Lucie spent the war years in the North.<sup>14</sup> The house was likely maintained by servants of the family, but underwent few, if any, changes during this period.

After the death of her brother in 1865, Lucie Harris inherited the 94 acres her mother, Lucinda, received in 1841 from her father's estate.<sup>15</sup> Lucie's father, Jeremiah George Harris, did not die until 1901 but it is unclear where he resided once Lucie assumed ownership of the home. His military duties most likely kept him away from Tennessee much of the time.<sup>16</sup> Although Lucie spent the Civil War years in the North, it was obvious that her sympathies remained with her native South. In her correspondence she wrote, "The people [in the North] do not seem to feel it at all—they have never been inconvenienced in the least by this war- it is said there are more persons at New York and Saratoga than there has been for years- and oh, to think how the Southern people have suffered."<sup>17</sup> Following the war Lucie returned to the nominated property to live; and in 1868, she married Dr. Van Sinderin Lindsley, a professor of Surgical Anatomy at the University of Nashville, consequently opening a new chapter in the home's history.<sup>18</sup>

Under the ownership of the Lindsleys, the house was changed to accommodate the needs and wishes of this young family. During this time, the orientation of the home was shifted to its current form to front Meridian Street, as it is clear that this road's construction was complete by 1871.<sup>19</sup> As part of this reorientation of the home, alterations included the construction of the projecting bays and portico on the east façade and the two-story porch on the south elevation. Also, much of the existing home was renovated to be consistent with these Italianate-influenced additions.

<sup>12</sup> July 2, 1847, *Western Weekly Review*, "Death Notices," Franklin, Tennessee, 1841-1851. Accessed 4/26/06 from <http://www.tngenweb.org/records/williams/wwwr2-09.htm>.

<sup>13</sup> McGavock-Hayes Family Papers, 1784-1788. Summary of collection prepared by the Tennessee State Library and Archives; McGavock & Hayes Family Papers, Tennessee State Library and Archives, MFM 626.

<sup>14</sup> Walter T. Durham, *Reluctant Partners: Nashville and the Union, July 1, 1863- June 30, 1865* (Nashville, TN: Tennessee Historical Society, 1987), 133.

<sup>15</sup> Lucie H. Lindsley Plan, May 12, 1870.

<sup>16</sup> Durham, 133.

<sup>17</sup> McGavock-Hayes Family Papers, summary.

<sup>18</sup> McGavock & Hayes Family Papers, "University of Nashville Department of Medicine and Surgery Graduation Bulletin," Tennessee State Library and Archives, MFM 626.

<sup>19</sup> Cox, 4.



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Changes include the installation of Italianate arched transoms over several door openings, the replacement of some doors, and the Italianate detailing recently uncovered on the south porch. The house also received some Eastlake-influenced interior updating at an unknown time between 1871 and 1885, with the addition of Eastlake-styled doors and Eastlake-influenced stair rails and posts.

After Dr. Lindsley's death in 1885, Lucie began to subdivide her 94 acres and sell parcels to new owners. By 1887, the frame building on the property had been demolished leaving the brick building and the wood dogtrot extant at the corner of Meridian and Joy Streets. In 1891, Lucie sold the home to Wesley Emmett Gatewood and she relocated to New York to live with one of her children until her death in 1906.<sup>20</sup> According to city directories, Gatewood and his family lived at 908 Meridian Avenue from 1891 to 1905.<sup>21</sup>

The neighborhood grew greatly in the years surrounding Gatewood's acquisition. Between 1880 and 1905, the city annexed large areas surrounding the city. By 1887, most of the land surrounding Fountain Blue had been subdivided into narrow residential lots that were ideally suited for the shotgun-style houses that were widely built in the late nineteenth century. Developers filled these lots with houses over the next two decades reshaping the once-rural landscape into an example of an early Nashville suburb. New forms of transportation also contributed to this growth in the outlying areas of the city.<sup>22</sup> An 1897 Nashville map reveals a streetcar line running by the corner of Wilburn Street and Meridian Avenue within a block of Fountain Blue, consequently making this neighborhood much more accessible for commuters.<sup>23</sup>

In 1905, Alonzo C. Webb assumed ownership of the property. He lived, however, roughly a block away at 309 Wilburn Street and no evidence indicates that he resided at the home on Meridian Avenue until 1928 when he moved into only a portion of the house. Immediately after acquiring the property, Webb sold a parcel of land on the northeast corner of the lot to Professor J. J. Keys, the superintendent of Nashville Public Schools. Keys moved into the house at 908 Meridian Street and lived there until 1913 when he and his wife completed the construction of their Craftsman-style house on the adjacent lot.<sup>24</sup>

The nominated parcel continued to undergo change during this period. The 1914 Sanborn map shows the brick structure and a shed that has since been removed on a lot approximately twice the size of the current property that consists of just less than one acre. Much of the additional property

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<sup>20</sup> Watson, 7.

<sup>21</sup> Cox, 4.

<sup>22</sup> Don H. Doyle, *Nashville in the New South, 1880-1930* (Knoxville, TN: The University of Tennessee Press, 1985), 87.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 90.

<sup>24</sup> Cox, 4.

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had been subdivided and sold by Lucie Lindsley. By 1908, the wood dogtrot had been removed, and the only the brick building remained.<sup>25</sup>

In 1915, Robert Cline moved into the house that was still owned by Alonzo C. Webb and began dividing the house into separate apartments. The new apartments required alterations to the home including the enclosure of the upper south porch and the division of that space and into separate rooms and bathrooms. Also the open space on the second floor was divided into smaller rooms, and additional entrances were placed along the south elevation of the lower south porch. Visible on the exterior, other additions to the house include the Craftsman entrance placed on the main façade facing Meridian Street. These stylistic changes were made as a response to the contemporaneous construction of numerous Craftsman residences in the neighborhood.

During this period when the house was divided into apartments, the neighborhood surrounding the nominated property experienced further growth. The streetcar line continued to run through the neighborhood and in the 1924 Nashville City Directory, the Number 18 Meridian Street Line is listed as traveling through downtown, across Bridge Avenue to the east side of the river, and eventually turning north onto Meridian Street. The line ran along Meridian Street until it reached Wilburn, within a block of the nominated dwelling, before it continued northeast.<sup>26</sup> Also during this time, the increased popularity of the automobile led Nashville's growth to occur primarily in suburban residential areas such as this neighborhood on the east side of the Cumberland River. Between 1910 and 1935, nine of the twelve additional houses extant on the same block of the McGavock-Harris-Gatewood-Webb House, including Keyes' Craftsman house, were constructed. Most of this construction occurred in the 1920s. The styles of these houses vary, but many have Craftsman characteristics.

In 1928, Alonzo C. Webb moved into a portion of the home but continued to rent the other apartments out. After Webb's death in 1939, he left the home to his four children. Susanna Webb, A.C.'s daughter and executrix, sold the house in 1941.<sup>27</sup> Hanor Webb, son of Alonzo C. Webb, eventually owned the property but used it primarily as a rental property. The property was purchased by the Ray of Hope Community Church in 2003 and is being renovated and restored to its c. 1915 appearance, prior to its division into separate apartments, for use as the Better Tomorrows Adult Education Center.

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid, 2.

<sup>26</sup> Nashville, Tennessee 1924 City Directory, 36.

<sup>27</sup> Cox, 4.

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The McGavock-Harris-Gatewood-Webb House maintains its integrity of location, setting, and association with the settlement and development of Nashville and Davidson County. Due to the paucity of public records and other historical documents associated with the estate's antebellum history, the dating of the original period of construction of the property is not exact, but extant physical evidence suggests that the house experienced two building periods in the 1840s, creating a country estate that reflected the city's antebellum prosperity following the economic panic and depression of the late 1830s. A substantial renovation and expansion reflecting the Victorian aesthetic for suburban dwellings took place in the 1870s. Once the neighborhood was subdivided, and became populated with bungalows and other small suburban homes, the house received its last substantial alteration, c. 1915, when it was divided into apartments. The McGavock-Harris-Gatewood-Webb House demonstrates the area's transition from a collection of large country estates in the early to mid-nineteenth century to a fully modern community by the late 1920s.

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## 10. Geographical Data

### Verbal Boundary Description and Justification

The nominated property is shown as the 0.97 acre parcel number 08203022900 on the accompanying Metro Nashville and Davidson County digital tax map. The nominated boundaries represent the current legal boundaries of the extant property.



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### PHOTOGRAPHS

Photographs by: Carroll Van West  
MTSU Center for Historic Preservation  
Murfreesboro, TN

Date: February 2005

Negatives: Tennessee Historical Commission  
Nashville, Tennessee

East façade, facing west.  
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East façade, facing west.  
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South elevation, facing north.  
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West elevation, facing northeast.  
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West and north elevations, facing southeast.  
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Northwest corner structural ties, facing southeast.  
6 of 32

North elevation, facing southwest.  
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Foyer, facing northwest.  
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Foyer, facing south into south bay.  
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Foyer, facing west.  
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Foyer ceiling, facing north.  
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South bay, facing northwest.  
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South bay, facing southeast.  
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North bay, facing southwest.  
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North bay, facing northeast.  
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Room # 2, facing east.  
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Room # 2, facing south.  
17 of 32

Room # 3, facing northwest.  
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Room # 1, facing east.  
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Room # 1 fireplace, facing east.  
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Room # 1, facing southeast.  
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Upper stair hall, facing north-northwest.  
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Upper stair hall, facing south-southwest.  
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Upper hall, facing east.  
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Room # 5, facing east-northeast.  
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Room # 5, facing west-northwest.  
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Room # 5 mural, facing west.  
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Room # 9, facing northwest.  
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Room # 10, facing southwest.  
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Room # 13, facing west, wall removed on porch.  
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Room # 7, facing south  
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Upper south porch, facing north into # 8.  
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